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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON THE OAS, JUNE 07, 2005

¶1. On 06/07, the Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" published an editorial entitled, "Abyses." "Nicaragua is facing a deep political crisis. Congress' refusal to ratify the State of Economic Emergency Decree that suspend several constitutional guarantees and the general discontent that obligated Enrique Bolanos to withdraw it, evidence a weak governance that lacked authority to impose his decisions."

"The legal confrontation between both powers, Presidential and public services authorities, is not remote and will provoke an intervention by the Supreme Court of Justice which will not favor the presidential decisions and will put the army and the police in a odd position."

"According to the 'crazy lady of the people,' Enrique Bolanos is putting more gas on the fire by wanting to call the attention of the OAS at the moment when the U.S. had presented a project that would give the hemispheric institution the function to 'watch over the democracies.' Eleven countries presented an alternative resolution to the U.S. proposal in the OAS in which it states that the assistance would be solicited by the individual countries."

"Analysts believe that Bolanos' government is playing with the crisis to make OAS agreement easier. Nicaragua's Catholic Church has served as a mediator in other crises and rejects the OAS intervention."

"All these conflicts have a lot to do with hatred generated between antagonist political parties that make countries ungovernable. Hatred that fires up ridiculous political confrontations, as we are witnessing in Honduran politics w. Instead of making proposals that would generate hope, we are going towards the same abyss that many others are in due to lack of vision."

¶2. The San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "Tiempo" carried an editorial entitled "Governable." "In the OAS' General Assembly inauguration, the Secretary General Miguel Insulza stated the necessity for the continental institution to contribute to Latin America's democracy so the region can deal with the risk of democratic backsliding."

"John Maisto, U.S. OAS ambassador, proposed a 'constructive and preventive action, which immediately provoked a strong rejection in the South American countries because they consider it as an interventionist initiative."

"No doubt that Latin America, after being through a complex period of revolutionary dynamism, 'cold war' and the end of west-east confrontation, opened a path towards a higher democratic demand and citizenship participation through new pressure and interest groups with international support."

"To understand this phenomenon with a schematic vision is not enough, it is necessary to deepen the analysis. It seems clear that it's easy to visualize in the institutional field and the political practice everything related with the presidential system and the ease to go forwards to a parliamentary system of major democratic and citizenship participation."

"In the same order of ideas, the OAS initiative to give effective application to the Inter American Democratic Letter is very good but the importance is to find the source of our countries' political practice and the necessity for democracy and legitimacy in the electoral process and power distribution of internal parties and citizenship participation."

¶3. The San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "La Prensa" published an editorial entitled "Hybrid democracy." "The OAS annual assembly has been in session since Sunday in Fort Lauderdale has reached a critical moment, shaken by the resignation of the former Secretary General and the hemispheres' stretch and shrink movement between countries with bilateral conflicts that block the continental vision."

"The central theme, democracy, its strengthening and crisis prevention under the new concept of the non-indifference

principle' opens the path to one of the OAS' actions, the growth of the `non-intervention principle'."

"The awful period of coup d'etats has disappeared from the continent; but some hybrid economies are winning terrain in the region. Each time democratically elected presidents are tempted by absolutism and assume power as a monarchy."

"Insulza preferred to talk about deepening democracy towards the risk of backward movement. Celso Amorim, Brazil's foreign exchange minister, said: `we want to strengthen the region's democracy but we want to avoid interventionist mechanisms.'"

"Venezuela sees this measure as unviable, giving strength to the non-intervention principle and leaving for other occasions the initiative that avoids hybrid democracies, an image which reflects the overnight absolutism that adversely affects power division."

Palmer